

Bert Adams.....

467 SQUADRON

R.A.A.F.

ATTACK on the "LUTZOW" at GYDNIA

18th December 1944

236 Lancasters of 5 Group attacked the port facilities, with 2 experienced crews from our squadrons to attack 2 pocket battleships anchored about 4 miles S.E. of the port. We were to arrive just after the flare force lit up the port area, and drop our bombs by the light of their flares. We arrived on time but couldn't see either battleship - our bomb aimer thinks a smoke screen was the trouble. We did our orbit, hoping to drop them next time around, but didn't see the ships until too late. However they were there, the "Lutzow" now lying almost N/S., just out from the jetty. We went around again, Bomb-aimer saying that we would turn west when ^{1 min past} ~~at~~ right angles to the red Target Indicators on the main target, which were now being bombed by the main force.

Our Pilot, a 'press-on' type, said we'd go in low level if we didn't bomb on our third run! This despite our being buffeted by exploding A.A. shells every few seconds since our arrival. (I had already put my parachute on!). Bomb-aimer said: "That would be bloody dangerous". But our run-up was good, Bomb-aimer's words something like: "Left- left- steady- left a bit- steady- st-ead-y st-ead-y- bombs gone". Our pilot continued over the target until our photo flash flare went off (they were automatic if you bombed at briefed height and speed) then said "Let's get out of here", nose down, turning starboard out to sea for a low level trip home.

Our target photo was a beauty showing 3 of our 10 bombs exploding across the deck near the funnel and one in the water very close by. We never heard officially what damage was caused to the ships, but a rumour said both were towed to Sterlin Shipyards and remained there to war's end. The main raid was judged successful with considerable damage to the port area.